



Meadow View Farm School
excellence as standard

Attendance Policy & Procedures

(including Children Missing from Education)

Reviewed: August 2025

Late and Absence Procedure

1. Purpose and Ethos

At Meadow View Farm School (MVFS), we recognise that regular attendance and punctuality are fundamental to a child's academic, emotional and social development. Given the complexity of needs among our pupils, including SEMH, autism, ADHD, PDA, and other associated conditions, our approach to attendance is both trauma-informed and highly personalised.

We work closely with parents/carers to ensure pupils are supported to attend regularly, with any barriers identified and addressed compassionately and promptly.

2. Reporting Absences

If your child is unwell or unable to attend:

- **Contact the school office on 01455 840825 by 9:00am** on the first day of absence.
- If absence continues beyond the first day, **daily updates** are expected unless otherwise agreed with the school.
- If you are unsure how long your child should remain off school due to a medical condition (e.g. contagious illness), please speak to the school office.
- For complex or ongoing issues, parents are encouraged to speak directly with **Katie (Headteacher)**, **Ben (Deputy Headteacher)**, or **Michelle (Family Support)**.

3. Medical and Other Appointments

We understand that children at MVFS may have a higher number of medical or specialist appointments. We request:

- **Advance notice** of any appointments, where possible.
- Medical evidence (e.g. appointment card) where absences become frequent or prolonged.
- Appointments to be scheduled **outside of school hours** whenever feasible.

4. First Day Response and Follow-Up

- If we have not heard from you by 9:30am on the day of absence, school staff will attempt contact via phone, text and/or email.
- If no contact is established and the absence is unexplained:
 - **A home visit may be conducted** by a member of staff, dependent on the child's needs and known circumstances.

- The absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** until a satisfactory explanation is received.
- If the child has an allocated worker, and if deemed necessary, the allocated worker will be informed.

This aligns with our safeguarding duties and the statutory requirement to follow up promptly on all unexplained absences.

5. Lateness

- The school day starts at **9:00am**. Registers close at **9:30am**.
- Pupils arriving after this time will be marked as **late** (Code L).
- Arrivals after 9:30am without valid reason will be marked as **unauthorised absence** (Code U), unless otherwise agreed.

Consistent lateness is monitored and may trigger a supportive intervention to identify causes.

6. Attendance Monitoring and Support

MVFS takes a proactive and holistic approach to attendance. We:

- Analyse individual and cohort patterns to identify issues early.
- Work with families and external agencies to address underlying causes, including trauma, anxiety, transport issues or health concerns.
- May offer part-time timetables, phased returns, or flexible arrangements as part of a support or reintegration plan in line with DfE guidance.
- Initiate attendance support meetings where needed.

7. Persistent Absence or Concerns

A pupil is considered persistently absent if their attendance falls below **90%**. In such cases, we will:

- Meet with parents to develop a bespoke support plan.
- Liaise with the Local Authority and/or Virtual School (where applicable).
- Consider multi-agency involvement for more complex needs.

Where support is not effective or not engaged with, we may escalate to formal procedures as outlined in the **Working Together to Improve School Attendance** framework.

8. Children Missing Education (CME)

At Meadow View Farm School, we understand that children missing education are at greater risk of harm, exploitation, and long-term disadvantage. As a school supporting children with SEMH needs and EHCPs, we take our responsibility seriously to track and support all our pupils' attendance. Our procedures are designed to comply with statutory duties and promote safeguarding at every stage.

Definition

A child is considered *missing from education* if they are:

- Of compulsory school age (5–16),
- Not on a school roll,
- Not receiving suitable education elsewhere (e.g. elective home education or alternative provision).

This includes pupils who:

- Fail to attend school for extended periods,
- Leave a school without confirmation of a new placement,
- Have their whereabouts unknown following a move or absence.

Safeguarding Concerns and Associated Risks

Children missing education may face:

- Abuse or neglect,
- Sexual or criminal exploitation,
- Radicalisation,
- Forced marriage or female genital mutilation (FGM),
- Mental health crises or undiagnosed conditions,
- Substance misuse,
- Travel to conflict zones.

Early intervention is essential to mitigate these risks. Any period of absence must be carefully monitored and actioned promptly.

Children Most at Risk of Going Missing from Education

While all children are vulnerable if not attending, risk is elevated for those who:

- Have a child protection plan or are known to social care,
- Are under youth offending supervision,
- Live in temporary accommodation or are homeless,
- Are from migrant, refugee or asylum-seeking families,

- Are from Gypsy, Roma or Traveller (GRT) communities,
- Belong to military families or families with frequent moves,
- Have a history of running away from home or care placements,
- Are awaiting a school place or change of provision.

At MVFS, many of our pupils fall into high-risk categories due to SEMH needs, trauma histories, or family circumstances. This is why robust tracking and family partnership are vital to our attendance approach.

Our CME Response Procedures

We follow a structured and compassionate process when a child is at risk of becoming, or is identified as, missing from education:

1. Daily Registers

Registers are taken twice daily. Unexplained absences are followed up immediately by the school office.

2. First Day Calling & Escalation

If a pupil is absent and no reason has been provided:

- The school will make multiple contact attempts via phone, text and email.
- If no response is received, a **home visit may be arranged**.

3. Ten-Day Unauthorised Absence

If a pupil has ten continuous school days of unauthorised absence:

- MVFS will refer the case to the Local Authority.
- This includes sharing information in line with **attendance return duties**.

4. Twenty-Day Continuous Absence

If the absence reaches 20 consecutive school days and:

- No reasonable cause is established, and
- The school and LA agree there are no reasonable steps to secure return, then the pupil **may be removed from roll**. This will follow joint reasonable enquiries, and all deletions are documented and reported per regulation.

Data Sharing with Local Authority

In accordance with the **School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024**, MVFS will:

- Submit '**new pupil returns**' when pupils are added to roll.
- Submit '**deletion returns**' when pupils are taken off roll (outside of normal transition points).
- Share details including names, addresses, parent contact details, and any known future school or address.

Safeguarding Referral

If there is concern that a child is at immediate risk of harm or exploitation:

- A referral will be made to **Children's Social Care** and, if necessary, **the police**.
- Staff must report concerns to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**, or take direct action if the DSL is unavailable.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Follow our attendance procedures rigorously.
- Record all unauthorised absences on CPOMS (or designated system).
- Ensure emergency contact numbers are kept up to date.
- Report CME concerns promptly to the DSL or Attendance Lead.

9. Communication

This policy will be:

- Shared with parents during admission.
- Reviewed annually and updated as needed.
- Published on the school website and available from the office.